AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A method for interconnecting tubulars by forge welding, each tubular comprising a wall and a tubular end, the method comprising: arranging the tubular ends of the tubulars that are to be interconnected at a selected distance from each other in a space, which is substantially filled with a flushing fluid mixture; forming heated tubular ends by heating each tubular end within said space by means of high frequency electrical heating wherein use is made of at least three electrodes that are pressed at circumferentially spaced intervals against the wall of each tubular adjacent to the tubular end to form electrical contacts, such that the electrodes transmit a high frequency electrical current in a substantially circumferential direction through a tubular segment between the electrical contacts; and moving the tubular ends towards each other until a forge weld is formed between the heated tubular ends to produce interconnected tubulars.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular ends are heated by at least two pairs of electrodes and the electrodes of each pair of electrodes are pressed at substantially diametrically opposite positions against the tubular wall.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the different pairs of diametrically opposite electrodes at each tubular end are activated in an alternating manner.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein two pairs of diametrically opposite electrodes are pressed at angular intervals of substantially 90 degrees against the tubular wall.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein three pairs of diametrically opposite electrodes are pressed at angular intervals of substantially 60 degrees against the tubular wall.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein each tubular end has a substantially cylindrical shape and three electrodes are pressed against the wall of each tubular adjacent to the tubular end at angular intervals of substantially 120 degrees relative to a central axis of the tubular and wherein the electrodes that are pressed against the walls of adjacent tubulars form pairs of adjacent electrodes that are arranged in close proximity to each other and substantially in the same axial plane and the pairs of

adjacent electrodes are actuated such that these electrodes have substantially opposite polarities.

7. (Previously Presented) A method for interconnecting tubulars by forge welding, each tubular comprising a wall and a tubular end, the method comprising: arranging the tubular ends of the tubulars that are to be interconnected at a selected distance from each other in a space, which is substantially filled with a flushing fluid mixture; forming heated tubular ends by heating each tubular end within said space by means of high frequency electrical heating wherein use is made of at least three electrodes that are pressed at circumferentially spaced intervals against the wall of each tubular adjacent to the tubular end to form electrical contacts, such that the electrodes transmit a high frequency electrical current in a substantially circumferential direction through a tubular segment between the electrical contacts; and moving the tubular ends towards each other until a forge weld is formed between the heated tubular ends to produce interconnected tubulars, wherein the tubulars have an irregular shape and the electrodes are positioned at selected angular intervals relative to a longitudinal axis of the tubulars such that the tubular ends are heated in a substantially equal manner.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the tubulars are multibore tubulars.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the multibore tubulars each comprise an enveloping pipe and one or more partitioning walls, which divide the interior of the enveloping pipe into at least two semi-cylindrical segments.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the enveloping pipe comprises a partitioning wall which is secured in an electrically conductive manner to the inner wall of the enveloping pipe at substantially diametrically opposite positions relative to a central axis of the enveloping pipe.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the multibore tubulars comprise an enveloping pipe and one or more small diameter pipes arranged in the interior of the enveloping pipe whereby the walls of the enveloping pipe and small diameter pipes are in electrical contact with each other.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the multibore tubulars are formed by pipe bundles and the walls of the adjacent pipes are in electrical contact with each other.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the flushing fluid mixture comprises a mixture comprising less than 25% by volume of a reducing fluid and more than 75% by volume of a substantially inert gas.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the flushing fluid mixture is a mixture of a reducing fluid which comprises hydrogen and/or carbon monoxide and/or a liquid reducing agent and a substantially inert gas which comprises nitrogen and/or carbon dioxide and/or a noble gas such as argon.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the flushing fluid mixture comprises between 2 and 15% by volume of reducing fluid and between 85 and 98% by volume of a substantially inert gas.

16. (Previously Presented) A method for interconnecting tubulars by forge welding, each tubular comprising a wall and a tubular end, the method comprising: arranging the tubular ends of the tubulars that are to be interconnected at a selected distance from each other in a space, which is substantially filled with a flushing fluid mixture; forming heated tubular ends by heating each tubular end within said space by means of high frequency electrical heating wherein use is made of at least three electrodes that are pressed at circumferentially spaced intervals against the wall of each tubular adjacent to the tubular end to form electrical contacts, such that the electrodes transmit a high frequency electrical current in a substantially circumferential direction through a tubular segment between the electrical contacts; and moving the tubular ends towards each other until a forge weld is formed between the heated tubular ends to produce interconnected tubulars, wherein a liquid or solid reducing agent is painted or sprayed at the tubular ends and an inert gas is injected into said space, whereupon the reducing agent is at least partly evaporated when the tubular ends are heated and the evaporated reducing agent is mixed with the injected inert gas to form the flushing fluid in-situ in the form of a flushing gas mixture comprising less than 25% by volume of evaporated reducing agent and more than 75% by volume of a substantially inert gas.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the liquid or solid reducing agent comprises a reducing agent, such as hydrogen peroxide, borax powder and/or an alkaline or beryllium hydride.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubulars are oilfield or well tubulars.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the quality of the forge weld formed between the interconnected tubulars is inspected by means of an electromagnetic acoustic inspection technique, which is known as EMAT and wherein induction coils are placed at both sides of the forge weld, which coils are held at a predetermined distance from the tubulars during the inspection process.

20. (Currently Amended) A system for use in a method for interconnecting tubulars by forge welding, each tubular comprising a wall and a tubular end, the system comprising a gripping assembly for arranging the tubular ends of the tubulars that are to be interconnected at a selected distance from each other in a space, flushing fluid injection means for filling said space with a flushing fluid mixture; an electrode assembly for heating each tubular end within said space and form heated tubular ends by means of high frequency electrical heating wherein the electrode assembly comprises at least three electrodes that are pressed at circumferentially spaced intervals against the wall of each tubular adjacent to the tubular end to form electrical contacts, such that the electrodes transmit in use a high frequency electrical current in a substantially circumferential direction through ~~the~~a tubular segment between the electrodes; and means for inducing the gripping assembly to press the heated tubular ends against each other until a forge weld is formed between the heated tubular ends.

21. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 20, wherein the gripping assembly is configured to maintain the tubular ends at a predetermined spacing during the heating of each tubular end, and comprises a mechanical stop which is configured to interrupt the axial movement of the heated tubular ends during the forge welding process when the heated tubular ends have moved along a predetermined distance towards and squeezed into each other.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the substantially inert gas comprises nitrogen and/or carbon dioxide and/or a noble gas such as argon.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the liquid or solid reducing agent comprises a cleaning liquid, such as hydrochloric acid.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the liquid or solid reducing agent comprises a cleaning liquid, such as hydrochloric acid.